

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*



Hills Ferry Barrier at the confluence of San Joaquin and Merced Rivers – Photo Credit: Winetta Owens

The Hills Ferry Barrier was installed in 1993, coordinated by Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, to protect Merced River fall-run Chinook salmon and Central Valley steelhead from migrating upstream in the San Joaquin River where habitat and water quality are not suitable for these fish.

Since the fall of 2012, the SJRRP has been conducting trap and transport studies to capture stray fall-run Chinook salmon that are able to get through the barrier and transport them to spawning areas in Reach 1 of the Restoration Area, close to Fresno.

The studies are evaluating the feasibility of, and developing protocols for, using trap and haul to transport adult Chinook salmon around existing barriers to suitable holding and spawning habitat in the San Joaquin River. Some salmon are acoustically-tagged and tracked with mobile receiving equipment to see where they go and the spawning habitat used. All transported salmon receive an external tag. These focused studies will help the Program to adaptively manage future efforts for more effective implementation of the Restoration Goal.

Streamside spawning is also being conducted to rear offspring of the transported adults for restoration Program studies. When the juvenile Chinook reach a size large enough for tagging, they are released in the Restoration Area or held until they are large enough to be used for other studies.

For more information about the San Joaquin River Restoration Program, visit [www.restoresjr.net](http://www.restoresjr.net).